

# Chairs with **MOBILITY FEATURES** breathe new life into senior living communities!



The journey of aging robs many from living health independent lives. Daily challenges associated with ongoing health conditions, injuries, medical diagnosis, surgeries or aging reduces one's mobility and prevents many of us from scooting up-to the table to work on a family puzzle or enjoy a meal with family and friends.

**Front line staff** are the first to feel the impact of reduced mobility among clients/residents as they are charged with providing whatever effort is required to move a seated person up-to the table. Front line staff/caregivers feel more like "**hired muscle**" than a "**giver-of-care**", as today's furniture technology fails to reduce the physical demands associated with providing care!

## **Simply stated...**

### **Chairs fail seniors because**

- chairs are not designed to MOVE

### **Chairs fail care staff because**

- chairs do not reduce the physical demands of care staff providing mealtime assistance

## **Therefore...**

Chairs designed for care staff who provide mealtime assistance for seniors should include mobility features that enable chairs to **swivel...turn...roll....and brake** for safety!

These features eliminate the need for care staff to push / pull / shove / twist when providing mealtime assistance.

## **As a result...**

- ✓ Care staff are at reduced risk of incurring a work place injury
- ✓ Care staff enjoy a healthier work environment when the physical demands associated with providing mealtime assistance is reduced
- ✓ Residents are at reduced risk of falling / tripping as they get seated at mealtimes
- ✓ Residents are more compliant and willing to follow care staff directives... creating a more enjoyable mealtime routine!

See **Section 3** for a complete list of benefits

## ***Consider the following:***

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- 1. Traditional chairs are not designed to move.** Traditional, four-legged dining chairs rely on friction between the legs of the chair and the floor to remain upright and immobile. Any force applied to move a chair (push/pull/shove/twist) with a seated person damages a chair's structural integrity.
- 2. Cushioned flooring further increases resistance when attempting to move a seated person.** While cushioned flooring is credited with minimizing serious injury should a fall occur, indentations formed under each chair leg make it almost impossible for a care staff to move a chair with someone sitting in it.
- 3. In many care communities, the person providing assistance is also a senior.** Increasingly, many early retirees are returning to work as care staff. As seniors themselves, they too are at risk of incurring injury due to diminished physical strength and muscle coordination.
- 4. Safety guidelines indicate a person can safely push no more than 40 lbs.** Any attempt to move a seated person of any size is unsafe and increases the risk of injuring oneself.

## ***What problem are we solving?***

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**Meet Bill...** Bill experienced a debilitating stroke and is paralyzed on one side, he had to enter a Long Term Care community. Bill is a big guy and is not easily moved. Other than a wheelchair, staff had no other option by which they could move him up-to and away-from the table! Bill either sat in the wheelchair or he would have been denied admittance altogether!

Confined to the wheelchair, Bill was positioned sideways to the table at mealtimes, coping as best he could during what should be (but wasn't) an enjoyable mealtime experience. The Long Term Care community was gifted a Titan / T2 Swivel-CC5. They chose to give the chair to Bill as the wheelchair he had been using was not compatible with any of the dining tables.



In just a few days, staff began to fully appreciate how much Bill's outlook on life had been affected by the style of chair he was placed into. With the Titan / T2 Swivel-CC5 chair he was less irritable, more cooperative and relaxed as now he was "just another one of the guys"!

This scenario plays itself out every day in Long Term Care, Memory Care, Acute Care, Skilled Nursing and Rehab, as well as private homes across the country. Providing staff with the appropriate equipment/furniture enabling them to assist persons in a dignified manner is of national significance.

## Daily challenges experienced by care staff include:



- Assisting persons with limited mobility get seated and moved up-to and away-from the table
- Assisting larger persons (300+ lbs.) get seated and moved up-to and away-from the table
- Assisting persons transferring from walker / rollator into a dining chair and moved up-to and away-from the table
- Providing dignity to persons requiring feeding assistance while they are seated in different styles of geri-chairs
- Providing assistance to persons who are no longer capable of understanding verbal instructions (Alzheimer's, Dementia) get seated and moved up-to and away-from the table
- Providing assistance to persons with impaired motor skills (Parkinson's) get seated and moved up-to and away-from the table

**...and finally, providing care without risk of incurring a personal injury.**

While it is expected of care staff to assist a seated person up-to and away-from the table, the reality is this task is almost impossible as care staff lack the physical strength required to provide assistance. Communities would be well served to identify a mechanical means that enables care staff to perform these tasks with grace and ease.

**Design Question:** How does a person living with reduced mobility get moved up-to and away-from the table?

**Design Challenge:** Our challenge was NOT to design a chair that rolls easily. These chairs already exist in the form of a task chair or a 1970's dinette chair. These chairs are considered unsafe as they can move unexpectedly and prematurely.

Rather, the design challenge was to incorporate mobility features which balance the need to:

- a. move a seated person up-to the table with ease and grace,
- b. reduce the physical demands placed upon caregivers,
- c. provide the seated person with an increased sense of dignity and self-worth,
- d. **...and to do so, without compromising safety for either the seated person or the caregiver.**

**To Learn More...**For seniors living with reduced mobility, these features enable a care provider to offer assistance without risk of injury to themselves.



[www.comfortek.com/better](http://www.comfortek.com/better)

# HOW DOES A PERSON GET SEATED AT THE TABLE...

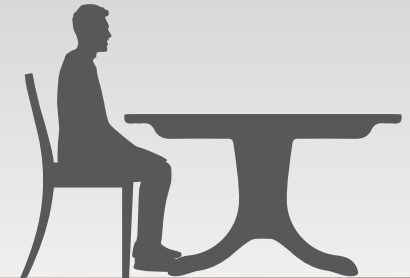


**POSITIONS  
CHAIR**

**GETS  
SEATED**

**LIFTS  
CHAIR  
SLIGHTLY**

**SCOOTs  
FORWARD**



AN **ABLE-BODIED** PERSON...

...REQUIRES NO ASSISTANCE



<b>CARE STAFF</b>	<b>CARE STAFF</b>	<b>CARE STAFF</b>
POSITIONS CHAIR	ASSISTS IN GETTING SEATED	<b>PUSHES - SHOVS - TWISTS</b> TO MOVE SEATED PERSON FORWARD



A **MOBILITY-CHALLENGED** PERSON...

...REQUIRES CARE STAFF ASSISTANCE  
TO GET SEATED AT THE TABLE

# SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITIES

Retirement  
Assisted Living  
Long Term Care






## HOW MUCH PHYSICAL EFFORT CAN CARE STAFF SAFELY EXERT?

### ( **LIFTING - PUSHING - PULLING** )

A person can safely **LIFT 35 lbs.** under normal conditions (no sudden moves or twisting)  
A person can safely **PUSH up to 20%** of their body weight and **PULL up to 30%** of their body weight.

*\* Silverstone Group*

	LIFT 	PUSH 	PULL 
140 lbs. CARE STAFF	35 lbs.	28 lbs.	42 lbs.
200 lbs. CARE STAFF	35 lbs.	40 lbs.	60 lbs.

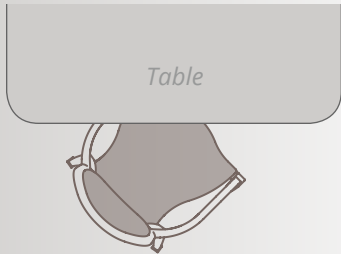


ESSENTIALLY...  
**A CARE STAFF RISKS INCURRING A WORK-RELATED INJURY**  
EACH TIME ASSISTANCE IS PROVIDED.

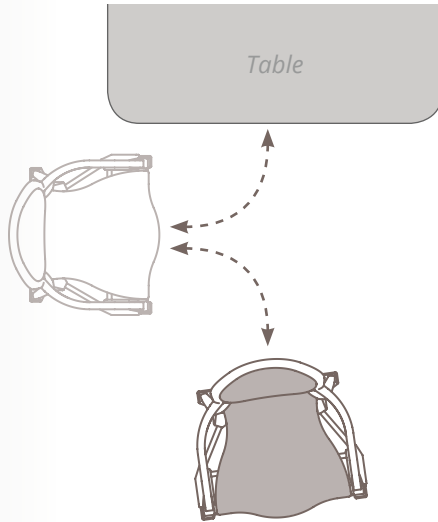
# HOW CHAIRS THAT SWIVEL...TURN...ROLL ELIMINATE TABLE INTERFERENCE



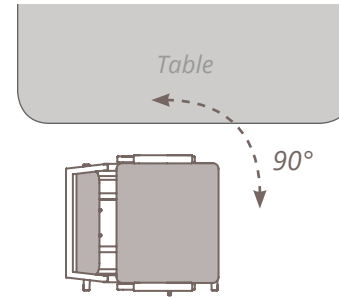
**Traditional Seating**



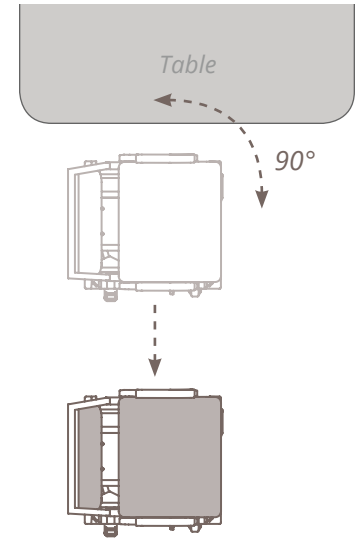
**CHAIR: Turns (360°)  
Rolls  
Brakes**



**SEAT: Swivels  
Locks - 90°**



**SEAT: Swivels  
Locks - 90°  
CHAIR: Rolls (Inline)  
Brakes**



# TO GET SEATED...

# ONCE SEATED...THEN WHAT?



CARE STAFF  
ASSIST THE  
PERSON  
INTO THE  
CHAIR

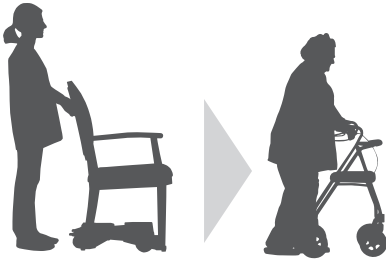


NO  
Mobility

With NO mobility features, care staff are required to **PUSH - PULL - SHOVE - TWIST** the seated person up-to and away-from the table.

Risk of injury / fall: **HIGH**

CARE STAFF  
MOVE THE  
CHAIR  
TO THE  
PERSON



Turns...Rolls...  
Brakes

With mobility, care staff **ROLL** the chair to the person.

The person is easily assisted in the chair.

Risk of injury / fall: **LOW**

CARE STAFF  
MOVE THE  
SEATED  
PERSON  
UP-TO THE  
TABLE



Turns...Rolls...  
Brakes

Once seated, care staff **ROLL** the chair with the seated person up-to and away-from the table with ease and grace.

Risk of injury / fall: **LOW**





# Chair *Caddie*<sup>TM</sup> RETRO-FIT



***It Turns...It Rolls...and Brakes for Safety!***

- Extends life of chairs by 2-4 years
- Eliminates damage to floors
- Attaches to existing chairs



*The Chair CADDIE enables care staff to easily and safely move a seated person up-to and away-from the table...without risk of injury.*

- Reduces care staff fatigue
- Reduces workplace injuries
- Provides dignity to persons with limited mobility

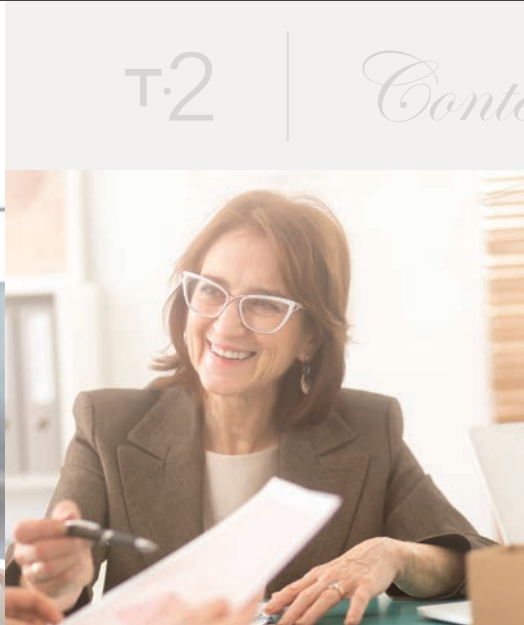
***NO Pushing...NO Shoving...NO Twisting!***

 [www.comfortek.com/better](http://www.comfortek.com/better)



# Who Benefits...

When chairs are designed to **Turn...Roll...and Brake** for safety.



T-2

Contessa



## ...REDUCE

*Workplace Injuries*

*WC Claims / Absenteeism / Overtime*

*Furniture Costs...as the premature replacement of chairs is no longer required*

*Flooring Costs...as damage caused as a result of constant skidding is eliminated*



## ...CREATE

*Safer Workplace*

*A More Enjoyable Mealtime Routine*

*Healthier Work Environment*

*Better Retention of Care Staff*



## ...NURTURE

*Creating a More Enjoyable Mealtime Routine*

*Families Experience an Increased Sense of Dignity & Self-Worth*

*Enables Seniors to Care of Each Other*



*Reducing Stress / Anxiety for Both the Seated Person and the Caregiver*

*a better way...*

*Creating a More Enjoyable Mealtime Routine*